

the argument showed an abandonment of even the ordinary ground of the authority of the pure "examples"—the excellence of authenticity: the plea is an entirely new one, and is, moreover, accompanied with so clear and straightforward a statement of principles, promises, and conclusions, that nothing could be more fair or satisfactory. Mr. Pugin evinces a slight acidity, certainly, but otherwise speaks plainly out; and Mr. Fergusson and Mr. Scott (particularly the latter) expound their views with admirable manliness.

Four years and a half ago, when I first began to take an interest in this question, if there was one word more than another in every body's mouth it was *precedent*,—"the authority of the ancients,"—the dogma of the books—Stuart and Revett, Chambers, Palladio, Alberti, Vitruvius,—the test of travel, whether you had set veritable foot on classic land far away, where the ruins are. Some have a good theory, that when the increasing purpose which through the ages runs, comes to the necessity for a new movement, there never fails to be some one at hand to fulfil the mission of its minister: and when *THE BUILDER* gives me credit for having a hand in the first of the attack, I suppose I may assume it to be so. And, in this view of the case, certainly there was something unusually apt in my connection with the movement. Two years previously I had come up to the great metropolis from a northern city cold, to push my fortune, carrying with me an introduction to just one architect,—but that *sic* one who, in my eyes, stood for the whole world, and whose name on the superscription of my letter made me almost quake with reverence—Thomas Leverton Donaldson—to this day a kind friend. He sat me down at his breakfast-table, and I felt as if on Mount Olympus. So pleasant was he—as he always is—that, in the fulness of my confidence, I expressed a decidedly heretical idea; but with one mention of the ancients I was vanquished utterly, and laid down my arms abashed. After this I had spent a year, by a singular accident, among the Yankees, and I returned with a broad-brimmed hat, a full-skirted coat and a shirt-collar turned down, with my hands in my pockets, and as much beard as I could muster under my chin. I was full of liberty and equality and go-a-head-ism (I think I never shall regret my year among the Americans; for their freedom of thought—but little understood with us yet—is a grand thing to see, and a noble thing to learn). It was not wonderful, therefore, that *precedent* should sound now most strangely in my ears, and the authority of the ancients seem a most extravagant conception; and, accordingly, I revolted. I wrote letters so devoid of veneration, that *THE BUILDER* could not publish all of them, and I therefore put the matter in a book. It was a vociferous and undisciplined book, as any one would suppose; but I am not yet ashamed of it: I read it half through the other day with, at this distance of time, the zest of novelty, and I felt bound to own that I was more brave and spiritual then than now.

This is all, so far, personal; but what I meant to reduce it to is this: much has been accomplished since that day, and in its accomplishment my utmost expectations have been realised in that scheme on which I built my strongest hopes—the architectural association of young minds.

Much, I repeat, has been accomplished since that day. Some may affect to sneer at it. "*Vox et præterea nihil*," says Mr. Pugin; "overweening conceits," chimes in Professor Cockerell, "avouring of aberration, tending to a strait-waistcoat." But the one of these authorities being somewhat reactionary, and the other somewhat erratic,—do this with me. Look into *THE BUILDER* of the 23rd of February last,—the very previous page to that in which our Royal Academy professor, from whom we hoped better things some time ago, he being, as it happened, in another humour, now styles you and me Babylonian-tower-builders on the way to a strait-waistcoat: look into this, I say, and read the kindly, manly, honest words of the "Old Professional Friend who lives a hundred miles from London;" the "Man of the Old School," who "looked in last night for half-an-hour's gossip" with our true-hearted *BUILDER*: how cheering those words are! "Although of the old school, he is one of

those who fully appreciate the intellectual stir of the day, and anticipate great things from it in due time. So far from pooch-pooching young men and their 'wild visions,'—insisting on rigorous adherence to precedent, and discouraging that freedom of thought which is beginning to show itself amongst them, he looks to them hopefully, agreeing with those who think that the destinies of a nation depend upon its boys." Read this over again and observe every word—the enlightenment of both speaker and reporter. "He would like (he continues) to see a little less flippancy and self-conceit in some cases (not a whit less of it, say I; else where would be the liberty of the young fresh intellect, undisciplined, but unsophisticated,—the mountain stream unchecked—the native soul untamed?); but," as he good-naturedly says, "when their knowledge increases, their own deficiencies will become more apparent (true; we learn to know, like Newton, only how little we know), and they will view with greater consideration the shortcomings of others." (Bravissimo to the man of the old school! Mark the words—"The shortcomings of others"—how honest they are! the boys will make allowance for the shortcomings of the men!) "It is not (pursues our old professional friend) because I have been five and forty years in the profession, that I am to expect implicit assent to all my opinions, and blind deference to all my suggestions, on the part of those who are now entering it: fashions have changed, though principles are permanent; views are extended, facilities are greater; the little that the youngsters do know is all in accordance with the present state of knowledge, and it is easier for them to advance on that than for one who has already run a race, and would perhaps have to 'try back' at starting." Such testimony from this good British-hearted man of the old school is worth a wilderness of vapouring about strait-waistcoats. Believe me, the movement which you and I began four years ago would not, at this time of day, be deemed worthy of such vociferous assault if it were really nothing or of no practical effect. It is because "men of the old school" are now beginning to look to the boys "hopefully," and "expect great things from you *in due time*," that it becomes worth while for a Pugin to throw at you a sneering cox, or a Cockerell to recommend a strait-waistcoat for you. Five years ago where was precedent? Many of you can now scarcely appreciate its mighty position. And who speaks of it now? Not even Mr. Donaldson, the one man of all who has the best right to maintain it with honour to the last, as the idol of a lifetime of learning. And who will say that it may not be better for us to have to meet now such a rebuke as Mr. Pugin's and Mr. Cockerell's, rather than to have gone farther and fared worse? Have we not seen revolutions, in running too hastily, overtaken breathless and overwhelmed? And have we not seen virtue, over and over again, in thrusting too rashly the ideal upon the real, exploding in tumult or expiring in dejection? And if our stage be a humble one beside Paris, or Hungary, or Rome; and if our interests at stake be far less mighty than the weal or woe of nations, and our weapons less majestic than cannon and the headman's axe, yet may we look from afar off upon those more magnificent dramas as they pass, and learn a lesson for our own. Our revolutionary course has crept comfortably on through four good years of preliminaries—quiet constitutional agitation—abstract test; and now there is no one really to oppose its progress. There will be reactionaries to sneer at us in fear of our success, and even to call us unpleasant names, and recommend to us unpleasant things, as a sure sign that we are succeeding. When the new light first assails the old, it assumes a sour expression, and conducts itself boisterously against a stronghold so difficult to shake; but when the foundations are exposed, and the citadel is tottering, it is the old light that now uses the bad language, and the new light laughs at it. But take courage: if in overthrowing the old (as it is admitted we have done), we have established no new in its place (wherein the complaint lies), we have at least prepared the way for the new, and, no one can deny, incited the desire to have it; and it will come, as the Man of the Old School says, *in due time*, as we shall see. It is some-

thing, and a great thing, to have attained the abstract ideal fact: to realise it in practice is a task for patience, and perseverance, and opportunity.

The precedent of the classical party being abandoned, and the upholders of the revived mediæval (as the prevailing fashion) being left to defend their somewhat analogous position, let us see how they do it.

If Mr. Pugin's real argument be simply that in Roman Catholic temples adherence to the forms and spirit of Roman Catholic times should be the rule, seeing that (as he lays it down) "as the faith of the church is unchangeable, the form and arrangements of so ancient church are just as appropriate for the nineteenth as for the thirteenth century," and further seeing that (as he says) "the externals of religion have suffered a lamentable debasement during the last three centuries, and by returning to the old and appropriate forms we are only regaining our *natural habit*,"—if this be Mr. Pugin's only position, the question is withdrawn. He argues as a Roman Catholic for Roman Catholics alone, upon a matter of faith, and we are bound to respect the dogmas of others as we would have our own respected. When architecture is adopted as a matter of faith, we cannot fairly demand that the question shall be decided on grounds of taste alone: if we argue, it must be on the field of faith first, and on the other only after we have won the former.

And when Mr. Scott takes the field in support of Mr. Pugin, if he represent that class in the English Church who hold similar views to those above alluded to, he is equally beyond our reach.

But you, I presume, view the question as not of religion, but of taste; and for your consideration Mr. Scott lays down in very fair logic a proposition different from the above and quite within your province. "We had an architecture (says he) which was at once the offspring of our race, our climate, and our religion; but we were enticed from it by an exotic style unsuited to any of them: this we have for three centuries been vainly endeavouring to render our own,—we have now become quite dissatisfied with it: what, then, can be more reasonable than to begin again where we left off?" And this seemingly fair argument he supports by the auxiliary reasons, that we have no style at all at present of our own,—that experience teaches us we cannot deliberately invent a new style for the occasion,—and that the old style is one of surpassing beauties.

This argument, if admitted, would at once lead us to abandon all we are now, or have of late been, practising, and to commence designing all our architecture on the model furnished by the last works immediately before the period of the revival—not only churches, but palaces, monuments, and public and domestic buildings, streets, railway stations, and the building for the exhibition of the works of industry of all nations.

But this argument, if I do not misrepresent it, is, I consider, faulty in all its main premises, but chiefly in one—namely, that we have no style at present of our own. I fancy I can see very clearly that we have a style of our own, and one which cannot fail to triumph ultimately over every attempt to introduce the style of another nation, another climate, or, let me add, another age.

Architecture, as I said long ago, is partly based upon the principles of construction, as the material embodiment of the spiritual idea: I may further affirm, that in its first elements and primary efforts it is of necessity entirely based on the requirements and manner of building. Now in our present adoption of all sorts of heterogeneous styles we happen to be aided by the possession of all sorts of materials;—ponderous blocks of sandstone, such as guided the Greeks, equally with the small Kentish rag, such as governed the design of the middle ages; with all kinds of roof coverings,—slate, stone, tiles, lead, corrugated iron, and all the rest of it; and what we have not at command naturally, we can produce artificially,—and if not the fact, then the semblance, for we can build with brick and make it anything we like with plaster. Moreover, with our iron, glass, slab-slate, ashlar, and veneering, cements, and painted joiners' work, we can add still very greatly to our means